qualities, for in spite of his loathsome debauchery he held converse on equal terms with statesmen of unchallengeable capacity and character, H. ... He was on friendly terms even with a *is a i ly* ^^^ ^ t^e j^k repute of Count Witte.

And he exerted undoubted influence over many virtuous priests, some of high, some of lowly rank, who believed in the saintliness of his life and leadership. He was possessed of an uncanny discernment of men, women and events. When war was declared, he had retired to his village in a remote Siberian province. As soon as he heard that hostilities were imminent, he sent a message to the Czar, warning him not to permit Sazonov and the Grand Duke Nicholas to persuade him to embark on a conflict with Germany, as it would inevitably *His opposition* end in the downfall of the Empire. He *to the War* imbued the Czarina with the idea that the safety of her children lay not in a doubtful and precarious victory at the end of a prolonged war; but in peace at the earliest opportunity. Her apprehension bred hesitancies which must have been communicated to her all-powerful husband. She therefore viewed with distrust all those who were intent on prosecuting the War to the unknown end. This mental or rather nervous attitude originated and gave colour to the rumour universally believed in Russia, that she was at heart

a pro-German. There was no foundation for that suspicion. Some time after her deposition she was reported to have said to one of the friendliest of her guards : " They said I was pro-German ; I hate the Germans. I am English. I speak English and I love England." But the pacifism of Rasputin was not what con-